

**The Vestry and Annual Parochial Church meeting (APCM)
Held on Sunday 11th October, 11.15am
in Leominster Priory following Family Eucharist**

Minutes

Approx 50 present

The Rural Dean, Rev Jane Davies, opened the meeting with a prayer.

The Vestry meeting

1. Election of Church Wardens:

On behalf of the congregation, the Rural Dean thanked the churchwardens, Helen Bricknell and Graham Millard, for the huge amount of work they do – especially this year. There were no further nominations, so Helen Bricknell and Graham Millard were declared elected.

2. Election of Junior Wardens:

Jonathan Bland is willing to continue to serve as a Junior Churchwarden, and Hephzibah Cole is also willing to serve. The Rural Dean praised the initiative. Jonathan was thanked for his work as a junior warden over the past year.

The Rural Dean closed the Vestry meeting and opened the APCM

APCM

1. Apologies: Anne Parker, Chris Hodson, Wendy Coombey, Geoff Bricknell

2. Minutes of 2019 APCM: Proposed for acceptance and passed *nem con*, and signed as a true record. It was noted that in 2021 the APCM will revert to the usual April date.

3. The Electoral Roll: On behalf of Geoff Bricknell, Helen Bricknell reported that this now stands at 143. The Electoral Roll was revised as of 25th September, and is available at the back of the church.

4. Annual Report: Copies of the annual report and the Church Groups report were available. The Treasurer presented the abbreviated Parish report and talked through its contents, noting in addition that the PCC has complied with the requirements on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and has adopted the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy. Thanks were expressed to Glenys Millard for her work on the accounts, to everyone who works for the Church and to all who contributed to the Church Groups report.

5. Election to Deanery Synod:

Paul Scott and Glenys Millard wish to stand down. They were thanked for their contributions.

The following were proposed:

Helen Bricknell: proposed by Wendy Coombey, seconded by Jean Dixon

Susannah Peppiatt: proposed by David Bland, seconded by Graham Millard.

Both accepted *nem con*. In addition, David and Kathy Bland, and Wendy Coombey are also automatically members of Deanery Synod.

6. Election to PCC:

Iain Welch has stood down from the PCC. All other members, including Susannah Peppiatt who was co-opted last year, have completed nomination forms and are willing to stand. All nominations were accepted, *nem con*. PCC members are Geoff Bricknell, Glenys Millard, Richards Phillips, Bill Quelch, Paul Scott, Richard Scott and Rob Walker. *Ex officio* members are Helen Bricknell and Graham Millard (Church Wardens), Susannah Peppiatt and Wendy Coombey (Deanery Synod) and David and Kathy Bland (licensed).

7. Appointment of External Examiner

The appointment of Sarah Briars as External Examiner was agreed.

8. Address from the Archdeacon of Hereford, Venerable Derek Chedzey

The Archdeacon talked through the process of appointing a new Team Rector. Recorded here is a summary from the Archdeacon, with all the documentation in the annex.

- a) Each PCC needs to elect 2 lay representatives. These are the parish representatives for the appointment they have to be on the PCC but don't have to be the wardens. 1 rep from each PCC will be involved in the interview process. The other rep will be part of the orientation day. Later on the PCC will need to hold a section 11 meeting to adopt the profile and formally adopt these reps.
- b) From the 19 PCCs you need to form a group of **no more than 8 people** to create a Benefice Profile and Person Specification (instructions on how to do this are attached). This should normally be drawn in a Team Ministry from your Team Council (Wardens & Clergy/ Lay Ministers) We can provide copies of what other parishes have done if that would help you.
- c) If Matthew Burns or Rufus Noy are planning to apply then they cannot be part of the process of drawing up the profile or person specification. They will let you know if they need to withdraw from the preparation stages.
- d) The new Rector will also be vicar to the Priory – the Priory will need to draw up its own specific profile to sit within the Benefice profile.
- e) You need to choose a single person to be the liaison person between you and my office who we will communicate with and pass information to.
- f) During the vacancy Jane Davies as Rural Dean and the Churchwardens are legally 'in charge' but in a Team Ministry you normally delegate to the Team Vicars the majority of the tasks. Together you should form a Team Council and meet regularly to ensure everything runs smoothly. Jane and the Wardens are in charge because the Team Rector is the 'Incumbent' of the Team and that post is now vacant.
- g) John Daniels will be in touch to assist the wider parish with preparing for the Benefice profile and Rev Preb Nicholas Lowton will work with the Priory to establish their particular needs. Once the liaison person is identified they will coordinate dates with John and Nicholas. Given the COVID limitations this work may have to be by Zoom.
- h) Once we have a Benefice profile group I will arrange a meeting with you with Helen Dimmock the Lord Chancellors representative. The Lord Chancellor is the appointing Patron on behalf of HM the Queen on this occasion.

9. Questions from members of the Priory:

- a) Susan Lyndsay expressed her thanks for the explanation of the process, but asked why it couldn't have started before the Rector left. The Archdeacon explained that the process could have started 3 months before Mike left, but that Covid had delayed holding meetings. Also, as this is a Crown Appointment, the process is governed by them, and they decided to delay until the position was actually vacant.
- b) Chris Jarman asked what the justification was for these measures? The Crown has the final say on the process. Each parish will have a veto. Vetos should not be used unnecessarily: the Bishop has to feedback on why the candidate was rejected, so vetos cannot be used on a whim. If there is deadlock, a break is taken to reflect and pray, returning later or even the next day. Good HR practice is followed.
- c) Ben Sladden asked whether the effect on morale of this vibrant community had been considered, with such a long time without a Rector (potentially a year). The Archdeacon explained that the process was different from usual recruitment processes as the incumbent is not employee, but rather owns the Benefice. And it is the benefice that becomes vacant. There have also been instances where the incumbent interferes in the process. The Finance Committee need to visit to look at the financial structures in place. Everything continues during the recruitment process, which should minimise the impact on morale.
- d) Pat Harper related a case where the 2 interviewees were vetoed, but a candidate was thrust upon the parish. Could this happen here? The Archdeacon reiterated that this is a Crown appointment, and Helen Dimmock will going with the process until someone is found whom the team and the parish will accept. No-one will be forced upon us.
- e) Philip Cornell commented that sheep need a shepherd: we will continue to need guidance. He also asked when we will hear a response to the current inquiry into Safeguarding? The Archdeacon stated that Bishop Richard has made a statement with Many McPhee from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. In response to needing guidance, the Archdeacon said that priority is given to churches with a vacancy, and Bishop Richard has already been invited to preach. The Archdeacon and the Rural Dean will also play a part, as well as the two Team Vicars.
- f) David Walker asked whether cost saving is a factor in delaying the appointment? The Archdeacon explained the cost saving was not a factor. That the Covid lockdown had delayed the start of the process, but that the Hereford Diocese was the first to restart appointments after lockdown eased. There could be further delays: another lockdown, the death of the monarch or a general election would all slow the process. But the intention is to move as quickly as is possible.

Graham Millard thanked the Rural Dean and the Archdeacon for joining us at our APCM, for preaching, and for explaining the recruitment process.

The Rural Dean ended the meeting with a prayer.

Signed

Date